

United States Senate

March 31, 2020

Pete T. Gaynor
Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency
500 C Street, S.W.
Washington, DC 20472

Dear Administrator Gaynor,

I am writing to express my concerns about the availability of COVID-19 testing kits for Colorado's two federally recognized tribes, the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe in Towaoc, Colorado and the Southern Ute Indian Tribe in Ignacio, Colorado. I urgently request that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) work with the state of Colorado to provide additional testing kits to the Ute Mountain Ute and Southern Ute Indian Tribes in Colorado in order to ensure that our tribes have the robust testing capabilities they need to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The total number of enrolled members in these two tribes exceeds 3,600 in Colorado, and the public health threat remains high in these communities. There have already been two confirmed positive cases on the Southern Ute Indian reservation, and the Indian Health Service expects an increase in positive cases amongst all tribes in the coming weeks. The federal government needs to fulfill its trust responsibility to tribal governments and ensure they have access to the resources they need.

It is crucial that FEMA provides a sufficient amount of testing kits both to the state of Colorado and to our tribal communities in order to ensure that they are able to respond to the grave threat that COVID-19 poses. Supporting these tribal communities in the midst of this global pandemic is essential in order to provide a path back to prosperity after this national emergency is behind us.

I request your urgent consideration to this matter and a response with an update on the availability of testing kits. Thank you for your continued work, and I look forward to continuing to serve as a collaborative partner on this effort.

Sincerely,



Cory Gardner
United States Senator
Cc: Indian Health Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs